

WI AQUAPONICS MULTI-AGENCY SUPPORT GROUP

January 15, 2013 Conference Call

WISLINE Call Facilitator – WDNR Chris Lilek

Participants: Carol Nagel & Kimberly Iczkowski-USDA-FSA, Jim Held-UWEX, Brandi Richter-NRCS, LCD, Dr. Mryon Kebus & Amy Basel-DATCP, Mark Aquino & Chris Lilek-DNR, Claus Dunkelberg-Milwaukee Water Council, Professor Chris Hartleb-UW-Stevens Point, Emmanuel Pratt & James Godsil-Sweetwater Organics.

The purpose of this call was to continue our discussion how Federal, State and County regulatory, funding & technical assistance staff can support aquaponic farming in Wisconsin.

Future purpose: We want to be able to offer local aquaponics contacts an easy to use method of getting Federal, State & County regulatory, funding and technical assistance in the future.

To further this purpose we have scheduled monthly conference calls to update ourselves on the latest regulatory, funding and technical assistance available to local contacts and then get this information out to the local contacts and aquaponic associations as efficiently as possible.

We want the aquaponics industry to succeed and grow in Wisconsin.

The next conference call is scheduled **for February 12, 2013 from 10 – 11:30am.**

Christine Lilek – WDNR Agribusiness Sector Specialist will obtain a WISLINE call in number for the call. Please email or call Christine at Christine.Lilek@wisconsin.gov or at (920) 387-7898, if you wish to join the call.

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

EDUCATION

TALENT

TECHNOLOGY

ECONOMICS

RESOURCE

FARMS & SUPPLIERS

INSPIRATION

EDUCATION

Education options are expanding into many different areas:

Professor Chris Hartleb, UW- Stevens Point provided the call participants with links to UW-Stevens Point's aquaponics workshops, classes and certification Program.

UW-Stevens Point is offering two semester-long college courses about aquaponics. Both utilize online lectures that run from late February to mid-May and can therefore be taken by anyone who has internet access.

“Principles of Aquaponics” is a 2-credit course with online lectures only. Introduction to Aquaponics is a 3-credit course that utilizes online lectures and has a 3-day hands-on workshop in mid-May. Announcement is attached.

WI AQUAPONICS REGULATORY SUPPORT GROUP

January 15, 2013 Conference Call

WisLine Conference Call Facilitator – DNR Chris Lilek

Page: 2

UW-Stevens Point is hosting the International Aquaponics Conference, June 19-21, 2013 which is in support of the International Aquaponics Society that focuses on commercial aquaponics. More information can be found at: <http://www.uwsp.edu/conted/ConfWrkShp/Pages/AquaponicsConf.aspx>

USDA Teacher training reached 20 teachers and 30 schools in Milwaukee and Chicago and “There Goes the Neighborhood” program funded by Wells Fargo helped restabilize the Washington Park neighborhood in Milwaukee.

TALENT

An aquaponics fact sheet is being updated by Jim Held and will be made available to participants of the March 1 & 2, 2013 Aquaponics Conference in Pewaukee, Wisconsin.

https://secure.wisconsinaquaculture.com/Events_Details.cfm?RID=40

TECHNOLOGY

Aquaponics digital media teaching tool is being BETA tested starting March 2013. James Godsil will send us a link to this project.

MIT and Future Farms are working together on energy innovations for aquaponics.

Sweetwater Organics Friday and Saturday international conference calls are fostering innovations in South Africa and India and will be shared in videos, Ebooks, and You Tube posts in the near future.

Claus Dunkelberg – Milwaukee Water Council announced that the Milwaukee Business Accelerator Center would be built in July 2013. This building will house innovative environmental businesses and organizations from Wisconsin, Germany and France. <http://posc4321.chrislow.org/resources/business-accelerator>

ECONOMICS

The group wants to help make aquaponic farming a sustainable business in Wisconsin. In order to do that we need to provide: an economic model for business start-ups, loans/grants, community economic development support, marketing resources, and insurance options.

Profitability

Action Item: In the last meeting, we discussed the need for an Urban and also a RURAL economic model, in order to predict if aquaponics will be profitable in Wisconsin. Chris Lilek will contact the Wisconsin Small Business Development Association to see if they could help with these models. Contacts have also been made with UW-Whitewater and County Economic Development Organizations.

Grants & Insurance

USDA representatives explained the Federal Farm Bill was passed for an additional 1 year. The noninsured and conservation practices insurance and funding are still in place. Kim Iczkowski (FSA-USDA) and Brandi Richter (NRCS) can be contacted for further details.

WI AQUAPONICS REGULATORY SUPPORT GROUP

January 15, 2013 Conference Call

WisLine Conference Call Facilitator – DNR Chris Lilek

Page: 3

Loans

Action Item: Jim Held and Carol Nagel will work with a fish hatchery applicant to check if \$300,000 could be obtained through USDA Operating Loan. Chris Lilek is checking with AgStar on low interest rate loans for fish hatcheries.

RESOURCES

Jim Held is preparing a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document for the aquaponics industry in Wisconsin. He will ask the group for answers and/or review as applicable.

Action Item: DNR will work on a written statement defining and encouraging enclosed aquaponic system installations in Wisconsin. This written statement will be helpful for both external and internal customers and staff. Distribution and further education of regulatory field staff on this written statement will be helpful to the entire industry. Chris Lilek & Mark Aquino work on this effort.

Nonnative fish import permits sent to the DNR are self-approved. Once they are in the mail, the application becomes the approval. The importer should confirm with the export company that they have mailed a current health certificate to DATCP.

Fish farm renewal licenses are currently being processed by Amy Basel-DATCP.

AQUAPONIC FARMS & SUPPLIERS

Demonstration

Sweet Water, Milwaukee, WI

Nelson and Pade, Inc., Montello, WI 53949

Pilot Projects

Grow Local LLC, Neenah, WI

Family Farms

Natural Green Farms, Racine WI

Production Farms

Growing Power, Milwaukee, WI

Aqua Terra Farms, Bristol, WI

Future Farm, Baldwin, WI

KP Simply Fresh, North Freedom, WI

Action Item: The call participants agreed a complete list of aquaponic facilities in Wisconsin would be helpful for a future reference. Chris Lilek will gather this information from Jim Held – UWEX and Rebecca Nelson-Nelson & Pade. Jim Held will email Chris Lilek a National Aquaponics website link that may list Wisconsin aquaponic locations.

Suppliers

http://www.indianafishfarming.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&catid=34%253Aworkshops&id=54%253Asuppliers&Itemid=66

WI AQUAPONICS REGULATORY SUPPORT GROUP

January 15, 2013 Conference Call

WisLine Conference Call Facilitator – DNR Chris Lilek

Page: 4

<https://www.was.org/shopping/shopdisplaycategories.asp>

INSPIRATIONS

Emmanuel Pratt – Sweetwater Organics shared with the call participants the story of how Abraham Lincoln believed that small farms were keeping America strong and that he established the USDA in 1860 in order to assist the farmers. Emmanuel and James provided the call participants with an understanding that aquaponics could be the equivalent of the New Deal farming innovations in Wisconsin in the 1930s. We will honor Lincoln & historical farming programs by scheduling our next call on February 12, 2013 (Abraham Lincoln's birthday).

http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_10.html

New Alchemy Farm – West Allis, Wisconsin would like to invite our group to visit their farm in the near future. Jim Held will contact them and schedule a day & time convenient for them.

A gathering of the inter university aquaponics R&D consortium at the 17 acre peri-urban farmstead of the Ranek/Welsch household will join us on our February 12, 2013 conference call! James Godsil is our link to this group.